Dropouts in schools in Tamil Nadu

1865. SHRI M. VINCENT : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the number of school dropouts in urban areas of Tamil Nadu is alarmingly increasing especially in slum conglomerations ; and

(b) whether Government propose to introduce new measures to make education upto upper primary level compulsory and also provide the infrastructures in all the slum areas of major cities of Tamil Nadu in consultation with the State Government ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI) : (a) According to available information, the dropout rates for children in classes I—V for the cohort completing class V in 1977-78 was 48.7% in Tamil Nadu. It declined to 22% in 1983-84. The All India average for the same age group of the children was 62.7% in 1977-78 and 50.3% in 1983-84. No separate information is available for urban areas or slum conglomerations.

(b) No such new proposal is under consideration.

Maintenance of National Highways

1866. SHRI M. VINCENT : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) what are the names of first three States in the country which have the record of good maintenance of National Highways;

(b) whether Government propose to increase the quantum of Central contribution to these States according to their records of good maintenance ; and

(c) what is the name of the State whose National Highways maintenance is the poorest and what are the reasons for the same ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) to (c) Development and maintenance of National Highways in the country being the responsibility of the Central Government, funds are allocated for maintenance of National Highways to all the States as per norms subject to availability of resources. States are not categorised for their track record in maintenance.

Commissioning of new International Airport at Madras

1867. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) what was the outcome of the trial landing and take off recently conducted at the new International Airport at Madras ;

(b) what measures Government propose to take to expedite the functioning of the above airport commercially, indicating the likely date for its commercial commissioning ; and

(c) whether Government propose to introduce a new International flight from Madras to coincide with the commissioning of the new airport ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL) : (a) and (b) The first trial run was conducted on 14-3-1989 to test the functioning of various installations, equipment and airport facilities including users'